

To the members of the Energy And Technology Committee:

The Area 2 Cable Advisory Council applauds the current proposal to provide for locally-produced, *Town-Specific* (TS), government and educational television programming.

It should be noted, that *Cable companies*, are primarily concerned with area-wide news, entertainment, TV shows and the like, in order to gain and perpetuate paid subscriptions. After all, they are mostly for-profit companies. Third-party providers living on subscriber funds also are more concerned with regional rather than TS programming.

Most such video providers have little concern for things as the seemingly drab issues of a town's Wetlands, Zoning or Sewer Commission meetings, meetings that only the local populous would have interest in. Cable operators generally look upon their FCC requirement for the provision of stations for **PEG** (**P**ublic, **E**ducational and **G**overnment) as a negative element of their business, as it costs money and makes none. Generally, the *Public* aspect is where most of the energy goes, because the operator is required to train and equip any requesting members of the public to produce programming, while there are *no such* requirements of the company to provide programming for educational or government activities. This results in little, or no effort by the operator for **E & G**. This fact alone, has become a prime reason for towns to take the lead themselves.

Several towns in area 2, strongly desired to become town specific and fought for years to wrest control of the E & G channels from its third party community access provider (because it did not carry out its responsibilities for cablecasting government or education programs), resulting in seven successful TS E and G stations.

Just the very fact that many town governments, such as Wolcott, desire to equip, operate and provide their own live video programming of local government and/or educational activities should be looked upon with great respect and admiration. Providing such desirous and capable towns with the ability to have a TS station should be an immediate priority of the Energy and Technology Committee.

A Little History: Cable area 9 and Cable area 2, combined (Greenwich to Woodbridge CT,) have 14 *TS towns*, and have been operating as such, for as long as 20 years! Most of these TS municipalities have both Government and Educational stations. Each TS town has its own equipment and mini-studios, having one to as many as five personnel to operate the cameras, editors, sound equipment, etc. The average TS town annually provides some 150 to well over 200 excellently produced, local TV fare, mostly of town government or local school events, but often, video productions are inclusive of special events in town, such as parades, concerts, fireworks, holiday happenings, local election events, debates, etc.

The Area 2 Cable Advisory Council highly recommends that any Connecticut town with a desire to provide its citizens with transparency in Government via town-televised meetings of their home-town government, should be strongly encouraged and supported!

Thank you,

Ron Davis
Chairman,
Area 2 Cable Advisory Council